



# The CONSULAR BEACON

*A U.S. Embassy newsletter for U.S. citizens in Uruguay*

Issue 4 | January 2017

The Embassy  
in Action

Tips for the Summer  
Season

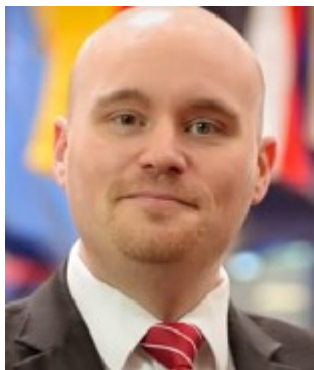
Zika  
Updates

Need your  
criminal record?

Q&A with  
Ambassador  
Keiderling



## MESSAGE FROM THE CONSUL



Welcome to the fourth edition of *The Consular Beacon*. As summer in Uruguay heats up and tourism season gets into full swing, it means a busy season for U.S. Embassy Montevideo's Consular Section.

This edition is full of useful information to help you prepare for hotter temperatures, seasonal crime trends, and mosquito borne diseases. From security information to the latest passport and consular news, we are dedicated to providing you with important information for your stay in Uruguay.

Take a moment to read through this great information and familiarize yourself with some of the most common questions that we receive.

If you recently had a great experience, or have an idea for us to improve our customer service, feel free to drop us a note at [MontevideoACS@state.gov](mailto:MontevideoACS@state.gov). We are always interested in hearing from our customers.

My team and I look forward to meeting you soon. Wherever your travels may take you, know that we are here for you.

## Samsung Galaxy Note7 Phones Banned

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), issued an emergency order to ban all Samsung Galaxy Note7 smartphone devices from air transportation in the United States. Individuals who own or possess a Samsung Galaxy Note7 device may not transport the device on their person, in carry-on baggage, or in checked baggage on flights to, from, or within the United States. This prohibition includes all Samsung Galaxy Note7 devices. The phones also cannot be shipped as air cargo. The ban went into effect on Saturday, October 15, 2016.

More information on what you should know before you fly can be found [here](#).

## IMPORTANT DATES

### EMBASSY CLOSED

**FEBRUARY 20:** PRESIDENTS' DAY

**FEBRUARY 27-28:** CARNIVAL

**APRIL 13-14:** HOLY WEEK

**MAY 1:** LABOR DAY



## Q&A with Ambassador Keiderling

### What drew you to public service?

I grew up in a Foreign Service family. When I was about nine years old we lived in Ecuador, and I remember thinking that I wanted to do what my dad did, even though I couldn't put it into words. I wanted to help build a bridge between U.S. and Latin American cultures. I wanted to correct the misconceptions and miscommunications between the U.S. and outside world to allow for a more healthy relationship between American citizens and the people of other countries.

### What is the role of a U.S. ambassador overseas?

The ambassador leads a team of American professionals dedicated to serving our country's interests and representing our country's values. We also work with a group of local staff who help us understand how to pursue U.S. goals in the best way possible in Uruguay.

### What is a common misconception about your work?

One common misconception is that ambassadors mostly spend their time on the local party circuit, at events with elites. In reality, we choose very carefully how to use our time. We always ask ourselves, "Does this advance the goals of the United States?" Our work requires that we get out and meet all kinds of Uruguayans in order to better understand their reality and figure out where their interests meet United States' interests.

### Tell us about the purpose of the U.S. embassy and its staff?

A U.S. embassy is a collection of U.S. public servants and local staff who represent U.S. interests and values. We advise Washington policymak-

ers how best to advance U.S. goals and then implement Washington's decisions. Around the world, the U.S. has five broad goals:

First, we help create mutual understanding between the United States and other countries. This is a two-way street where we seek to better understand Uruguay, while also fostering a better appreciation of U.S. values, history, and policies for Uruguayans.

Second, we work to gain greater security for the United States. In order to achieve this, we have to work to increase security in the rest of the world. In Uruguay, we work together to increase border security and to address transnational crime.

Third, we work to increase economic prosperity for the United States and its citizens. We understand that our economic prosperity depends on increased prosperity around the world, including in Uruguay. By increasing trade and investment between our two countries, and helping increase the knowledge and skills of Uruguayans and Americans in 21st century higher education, digital technology, and English language skills, we can help both our countries and our citizens prosper.

In addition, the United States believes there are universal values that apply to all human beings.

For instance, we believe in the people's right to select who governs them and strong democratic institutions; the right to assemble peacefully and



have free opinions; and in equality of opportunity and benefits for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation. This belief in universal values doesn't mean that the U.S. has somehow achieved a perfect society. It does mean we work to improve ourselves, while we seek to increase tolerance, decrease discrimination, and make our society more just.



On the international stage, the United States searches for nations who share these common values, such as Uruguay. Our fourth and fifth broad foreign policy goals, therefore, are to strengthen democratic institutions and increase social justice. Together, the United States and Uruguay can defend and expand the reach of these values.

### **How does Uruguay contribute to Latin America and the world?**

In the realm of global security, Uruguay contributes through its efforts at the United Nations, especially in the area of international peace-keeping. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Uruguay helps manage global conflict situations, such as crises in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Haiti. Uruguay is also very active at identifying and acting against transnational organized crime.

In the realm of economic prosperity, Uruguay is an active, leading member of the international commercial and financial systems.

By using renewables for over 90% of its energy needs, Uruguay is a model for the extensive use of renewables in a modern country. Uruguay has a strong information technology sector; Uruguayan brainpower develops many software products and exports that software globally.

Finally, in the areas of democracy and social justice, Uruguay is a model representative democracy with dedication to the rule of law and keeping corruption to a minimum. Tolerance, a devotion to combatting discrimination against underprivileged groups, promotion of LGBT rights, religious tolerance, racial equality, and protection of workers' rights are the contributions Uruguay has made to advancing social justice locally and globally.

### **Is there anything you would like to say to American citizens in Uruguay?**

Just by being Americans, you all represent the United States. While understanding that we are not a perfect society, that we're still working on making our country "a more perfect union," it's honorable to represent the United States, warts and all, to the best of your ability. Whether we like it or not, our country will be judged by the actions of all U.S. citizens. You are our everyday ambassadors here in Uruguay.

Read Ambassador Keiderling's biography [here](#).





## How to Get Your U.S. Police Record

U.S. citizens living abroad are often asked to provide information on their criminal record or proof that one does not exist. Contrary to popular belief, the U.S. Embassy in Montevideo does not provide or take fingerprints for the purpose of conducting criminal record searches. These record searches are conducted centrally by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) in the United States.

To obtain FBI criminal records, the requestor must **first call** the Office of INTERPOL in Montevideo and make an appointment to have manual fingerprints taken.

**INTERPOL Address:** Maldonado 1109

**Phone:** 152-4635

**You should go to your interview with the following:**

1. International credit card;
2. Your valid passport;
3. Social Security Number (if applicable).

INTERPOL personnel will take your fingerprints and request that you complete a form. Subsequently, you will have to mail the sealed envelope provided by INTERPOL (containing your fingerprints and completed form) to the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division in the United States. While it is difficult to estimate how much time this will take, the FBI currently estimates a minimum of 14 weeks. You should also allow additional time for international mailing and processing.

After the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division finalizes your request and prints a report, you must acquire an apostille/authentication of the record from the U.S. Department of State's Office of Authentications in Washington, DC – this cannot be done at the U.S. Embassy in Montevideo. You may contact a family member in the United States to assist you with this, or there are a number of third party couriers/messengers that will do this for you, for a fee. You can locate one of these couriers by visiting the official FBI [website](#).

Once the FBI record has been apostilled at the U.S. Department of State in Washington D.C., your family member or third-party courier should mail the documentation to you for use in Uruguay. In some cases, the entire process can take between 2-3 months. Please allow sufficient time, as this process is not managed by the U.S. Embassy in Montevideo, nor can we expedite processing.



## How to Get Your U.S. Birth Certificate

If you are a U.S. citizen seeking to obtain a copy of your U.S. birth certificate, you must contact the office in charge of “vital records” in the state in which you were born. The U.S. Department of State does not issue or certify state-issued birth certificates. Many states now have electronic processing and will mail the document to you or a family member. The following website provides contact information for the office in each state that will provide such documentation: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>.



If you are a U.S. citizen born outside of the United States and previously obtained a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, please visit [Travel.State.Gov](http://Travel.State.Gov) to learn how to obtain a duplicate copy.

If you are under 18 years old, were born outside of the United States, and believe you are a U.S. citizen but have never filed paperwork to process your claim, please visit the U.S. Embassy [website](#) to learn how to apply for the Consular Report of Birth Abroad.

**Important:** Please note that state documents must be apostilled in the United States in order for it to be valid in Uruguay. For information on how to apostille a document in the United States, please visit the following link: [U.S. Department of State \(Apostille\)](#).

## Social Security COLA Increase in 2017

The Social Security Administration announced a 0.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in 2017 for the over 65 million Americans who receive monthly benefits. The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Securing today  
and tomorrow

The COLA will take effect with SSI payments paid on December 30, 2016 and Social Security payments paid in January 2017.

You can also find details about the new COLA at <https://www.socialsecurity.gov/cola>.





## Did you KNOW?

Have you used the website [tramites.gub.uy](http://tramites.gub.uy)? If not, take advantage of this useful official Uruguayan government resource. The site provides all the necessary information residents need in order to correctly navigate the various governmental services and processes in Uruguay, online or in person.

Some of the most searched topics include:

- **Cedula/ ID Card Renewal**
- **Criminal Records**
- **Traffic Fines**
- **Obtaining a Passport and Passport Renewal**
- **“Permiso de Menor” Letters**
- **Documentation: Birth and Death Certificates, Marriage Records**
- **Pre-Marriage Procedures**

[tramites.gub.uy](http://tramites.gub.uy)

Toda la información de los trámites del Estado

¿Qué trámite desea realizar?

BUSCAR

? Sugerencia: puede ingresar el nombre del organismo o palabras relacionadas con el trámite.

## Wardens in the NEWS

The *Washington Post* recently published an article about the U.S. Department of State's warden program. Wardens are U.S. citizens living overseas who volunteer with their local U.S. embassy or consulate to assist fellow U.S. citizens during emergency situations. In many cases a warden lives in an area distant from U.S. Embassy or Consulate officials.

The article highlights some of the important work wardens have done abroad in places such as Colombia and Cambodia. The entire article can be found [here](#).



We are currently in need of wardens in the Rio Negro, Paysandú, Salto, and Artigas regions (Zone 5) of Uruguay. If you are interested in becoming a warden, please contact [MontevideoACS@state.gov](mailto:MontevideoACS@state.gov).

[uruguay.usembassy.gov](http://uruguay.usembassy.gov)



# SUMMER IS HERE! BE SAFE, HAVE FUN

## Travelling? Enroll in STEP

Before you travel, make sure you enroll your trip with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate with our free service, the **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)**.



After you enroll you will receive important security and life safety information from the relevant embassy or consulate during emergency situations in your destination country. Additionally, the information you provide will help the embassy or consulate contact you if your family or friends need to relay emergency information to you.

Enroll today at <https://step.state.gov/step/>.

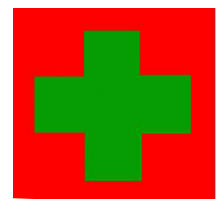
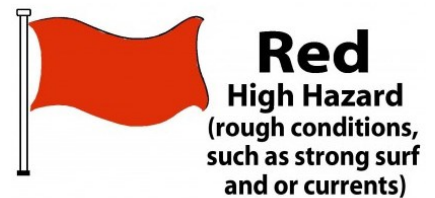
## Beach Safety – Flag System

Now that Summer is here, it is important to remember how to keep yourself, family, and friends safe when enjoying Uruguay's numerous beaches. **Please keep these safety tips in mind:**

- Only enter beach waters where a lifeguard is present.
- Rocky areas are dangerous and are not meant for bathroom use.
- It is not recommended to swim far away from the coast, even if you believe you are a good swimmer.
- If you see a swimmer in danger, the best way to help is by warning the lifeguards. Do not attempt a rescue without having the appropriate knowledge and training.
- It is not recommended to enter the water with inflatable objects. Inflatables can be dangerous due to high winds.
- If you go with children, make sure you are constantly watching them.
- Bonfires are generally not allowed on beaches.

Make sure you look at what flag is up when you arrive at the beach. They are there to inform swimmers of the water conditions. Please see to the right for what each flag means. Not pictured is the **blue and white checkered flag**, which means **lost child at the lifeguard stand**. The **cross** indicates the **water is not sanitary** due to the presence of Cyanobacteria, oil, fecal matter, dead fish, and more. The **red triangle** means **danger zone—bathing forbidden**.

Lifeguards are at all cleared beaches in Montevideo from 8am to 8pm until March 31st. Also, if someone wants to use jet skis or boats they must first receive permission from the Prefectura. The Intendencia de Montevideo is in charge of all lifeguards and beaches in Montevideo.



## Remember Your Sunscreen!

# Protect All the Skin You're In

- ☀️ Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States, yet most skin cancers can be prevented.
- ☀️ Every year, there are **63,000 new cases of** and **9,000 deaths** from melanoma—the deadliest form of skin cancer.

Ultraviolet (UV) exposure is the most common cause of skin cancer. **A new CDC study shows that the majority of Americans are not using sunscreen regularly to protect themselves from the sun's harmful UV rays.**



In fact, fewer than **15% of men** and fewer than **30% of women** reported using sunscreen regularly on their face and other exposed skin when outside for more than 1 hour.

**Many women report that they regularly use sunscreen on their faces but not on other exposed skin.**



## Remember Your Sunscreen!

**Choose sun protection strategies that work.**

**Use broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15+ to protect any exposed skin.**



**Seek shade, especially during midday hours.**

**Wear a hat, sunglasses and other clothes to protect skin.**



**Sunscreen works best when used with shade or clothes, and it must be re-applied every two hours and after swimming, sweating, and toweling off.**



**U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention**

CS255931

## Security Updates

The summer season in Montevideo and other popular destinations in Uruguay typically coincides with an increase in the volume of crimes against persons and property. As such, we would like to remind you of some security best practices.

### **Residential Security**

- Always use your alarm system and locks.
- Store high-value personal belongings away from public view.
- Avoid on-street parking. If unavoidable, park in well-lit areas that are in public view.
- Avoid discussing periods of non-occupancy with house staff, gardeners, etc.

### **Personal Security**

- Maintain situational awareness. Be observant of the people and vehicles around you. If something doesn't look right, leave the area.
- Avoid isolating situations. Travel in groups and stick to heavily trafficked locations.
- Avoid restaurants, gas stations, and grocery stores after 22:00, if possible.
- Keep the amount of valuables on your person to a minimum (money, credit cards, cellular phones, jewelry, etc.).
- Do not resist or intervene in an armed robbery.
- Identify and report suspicious people, vehicles, or activities. If something doesn't look right, notify the police.
- Be unpredictable. Vary the time and location of routine actions.



## Get Help in an Emergency

Locate the Nearest  
Embassy or Consulate





# ZIKA & DENGUE UPDATES

## TRAVELERS CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES **FROM ZIKA**

### Zika Prevention Kit for Travelers

The products below can help protect you from Zika. Build your own Zika prevention kit and bring your kit with you on your trip.



#### Bed Net

- If your room is not well screened and air conditioned, use a bed net when sleeping or resting.
- Mosquitoes can live indoors and will bite at any time, day or night.



#### Insect Repellent

- Use EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone.
- Always follow the directions on the bottle.
- Do not spray repellent under clothing.
- If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.
- When used as directed, these insect repellents are proven safe and effective even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- Most repellents, including DEET, can be used on kids older than 2 months. Mosquito netting can be used to cover babies <2 months old in carriers, strollers, or cribs to protect them from mosquito bites.



#### Condoms

- Zika can be passed through sex. Bring male or female condoms with you when traveling. Use condoms during and after travel to protect yourself and your partner.
- If you are pregnant, use condoms for the rest of your pregnancy.
- Not having sex eliminates the risk of getting Zika through sex.



#### Permethrin Spray

- Spray your clothing and gear with permethrin to help protect you from mosquito bites or bring pre-treated items.
- Always follow the directions on the bottle. Reapply as directed.
- Do not spray permethrin on your skin.
- Long sleeves and long pants help protect against Zika.

[www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

# **ZIKA:** THE BASICS OF THE VIRUS AND HOW TO PROTECT AGAINST IT



## About Zika

Zika virus spreads to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito (*Ae. aegypti* and *Ae. albopictus*). Zika can also be passed through sex from a person who has Zika to his or her sex partners and it can be spread from a pregnant woman to her fetus. People can protect themselves from mosquito bites and getting Zika through sex. This fact sheet explains who's most affected and why, symptoms and treatment, and how to protect against Zika.

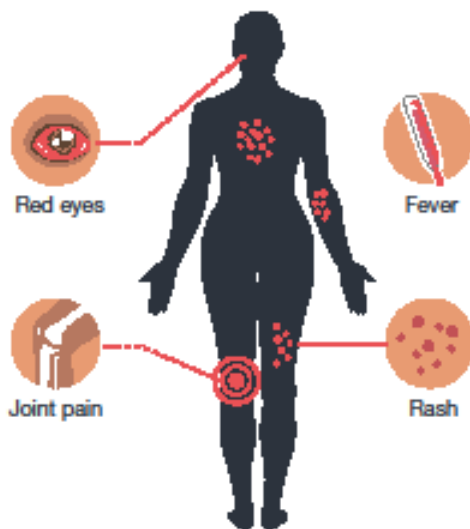
## How Zika Spreads

Protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites all day and night, whether you are inside or outside. A mosquito becomes infected when it bites a person already infected with Zika. That mosquito can then spread the virus by biting more people.



### Zika virus can also spread:

- During sex with a person who has Zika to his or her sex partners.
- From a pregnant woman to her fetus during pregnancy or around the time of birth.
- Through blood transfusion (likely but not confirmed).



## Zika Symptoms

Many people infected with Zika won't have symptoms or will only have mild symptoms. The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes. Other common symptoms include muscle pain and headache. Symptoms can last for several days to a week. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika. Once a person has been infected with Zika, they are likely to be protected from future infections.

[www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)

CS265799A August 12, 2016



## Current Zika Outbreak

Zika outbreaks are currently happening in many countries and territories. The mosquitoes that can become infected with and spread Zika live in many parts of the world, including parts of the United States.

[Specific areas where Zika virus is spreading](#) are often difficult to determine and are likely to change over time. If traveling, please visit the [CDC Travelers' Health website](#) for the most recent travel information.



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